

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROCESSING A NETWORK MANAGER
COMMAND IN A COMMUNICATION NETWORK**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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A network element, network switch, and/or a network element includes a control layer implemented over a physical layer. The network element, switch, and/or manager includes firmware to support particular processing to automate the establishment, modification, and/or deletion of communication links within the communication network, which includes processing that begins by generating a network manager command regarding a communication link between a 1st port and a 2nd port of the communication network. Upon receiving the command, the affiliated network element determines the type of network manager command and, when the network manager command is a command to establish a link, determines a network path between the 1st port and the 2nd port. Next, the affiliated network element generates a network element command regarding the link between the 1st and 2nd ports based on the determined network path and provides the network element command to the next network element in the determined network path. When the next network element is a

